

**We should be trying to rid ourselves of Shankland... as soon as possible**  
*—assistant Town Clerk, 1971*

**The present fee as calculated can only be described as extortionate**  
*—City Treasurer*

THE CITY TREASURER said his fee was extortionate.  
 The City Planning Officer said he talked too much and wasted time.

The assistant Town Clerk said they should get rid of him.

The man they were all talking about was Graeme Shankland, the internationally known architect and planner, whose latest and most lucrative project in Liverpool — the Belle Vale housing estate — has met with disaster.

In Free Press No 17 we quoted confidential reports in which top Corporation officials blamed Shankland's firm for massive overspending on the appalling Belle Vale scheme.

And we revealed that the City Council are likely to sue Shankland to try and recoup

some of the £2 million overspent.

The Belle Vale dispute is the climax to a long series of arguments with Shankland, who has been doing work for the Corporation since 1961.

First — as Planning Consultant — he re-designed the City Centre. Later he was consultant on the Inner Motorway and the Strand/Paradise Street development.

And on all these projects there were rows over money. And no wonder, for Shankland...

- Did work the council had not formally asked him to do — and got paid for it.
- Attended meetings at £500 a time.
- Was paid a retainer of £2,000 a year for answering letters and phone calls.
- Asked to be paid 'estimated' expenses.



Shankland:  
*"I will be at the Adelphi..."*

# The cost of Shankland...

"WE SHOULD BE trying to rid ourselves of Shankland Cox and Associates as soon as possible."

Those were the words — back in 1971 — of assistant Town Clerk Mr Fred Lloyd.

He was urging the City Treasurer not to bother reclaiming fees of £7,143 which had been over-paid to Graeme Shankland and his firm of whizz-kid architects.

But now — four years, and half a million pounds-worth of fees later — Liverpool has still not rid itself of Shankland Cox and Associates.

And the council are talking of suing Shankland for negligence on the disastrous Belle Vale housing project.

Shankland's business association with Liverpool dates back almost fourteen years, and despite all the hoo-ha in the Press about Shankland the 'passionate', 'imaginative master-planner', the association has been a stormy one, marked in particular by rows over money.

In 1961 Liverpool had no Planning Department and the council were looking for a planning consultant to re-design the city centre. A committee of university professors chose Shankland.

He sprang — as the Sunday Times put it — "from that fountainhead of imaginative planners, the London County Council."

In Liverpool his imagination ran riot. Working mainly from London, he planned for us the Inner Motorway, the Civic Centre, St John's Precinct and the Strand/Paradise scheme. He dreamed of putting the pool back in Liverpool with a lake near Lime Street.

He was so busy he had to call in another firm of architects to re-design his own office.

Shankland's fees as planning consultant were £60,000 a year and, as the responsible Liverpool Echo predicted: "Almost certainly events will prove the money to be a fruitful investment."

His fees had reached a total of £190,000 when his first contract ran out in January 1965.

By that time the city's Planning Department had been set up and was working jointly with Shankland. The department was intended to take over from Shankland in 1966.

The council had planned to reduce his fee for the transitional year to £50,000. But Shankland had difficulty reducing the size of his staff. Also, delays caused by the Corporation meant that his city centre plan might not be completed on time.

Shankland should, of course, have told the council of his problem, but he did not. Instead he carried on at

full speed and later sent the council a bill for an extra £13,500.

In a confidential report the Town Clerk was mildly critical of his action, but concluded that he had proceeded with good faith. So the council paid up.

With the city centre plan completed and the Planning Department established, the council decided to keep Shankland as a consultant on a retainer of £4,000 a year for the next five years.

This included £2,000 a year for answering letters and phone calls from the Planning Department (which probably made Shankland the world's most expensive answering service) and attending between two and four meetings a year with officials, at £500 a meeting.

The City Planning Officer, Mr Francis Amos, very soon realised how little the city was getting for its money. "I am concerned," he told the Town Clerk in a memo, "that a great deal of money is being spent on discussion and very little in the tangible form of reports and drawings. I quite frankly feel that it is a waste of time."

Meanwhile Mr James Salt, the City Treasurer, was keeping a check on the amount of work Shankland was actually doing. He was not pleased to discover, one month before the five-year contract expired, that if Shankland had been paid on a time basis instead of the retainer, he would have received a total of only £11,000 compared with the £20,000 the council had agreed to pay.

Naturally Shankland was upset when this lucrative contract ran out and he sent a tear-jerking letter to the Town Clerk:

"PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL: Dear Stanley... I am coming up to Liverpool to attend what, as I have just learned from Alfred Stocks (the Deputy Town Clerk), is to be my last appearance in Liverpool as the council's advisor on the central area plan."

"I was very shocked to receive, at this last minute, notice that the Deputy Clerk proposes finally to terminate my planning commission, in view of my long association with Liverpool."

"I do not know if you are aware of this. Do you agree with this view? I do not accept that I and my team have no useful further contribution to the central area plan and its realisation."

"I will be at the Adelphi by 6 p.m. on Monday and can be telephoned there..."

THIS was not the only work Shankland had been doing for the council.

In 1964 he had been asked to do extra work on the proposed Inner Motorway and the Strand/Paradise Street development.

For work connected with the Inner Motorway he was paid at the Town Planning Institute's day rate (which works out at more than twice a normal salary). By 1967 his fees on this project had topped £42,000.

Now Shankland was not only a planner — he was also an architect. And about this time the official day rate for architects was increased, making them slightly better paid than planners. Shankland told the City Treasurer that in future he would like to be thought of as an architect... and paid accordingly.

The City Treasurer pointed out that Shankland had been engaged as a planner and would have to remain a planner.

Shankland also appeared rather bored with having to supply a list of expenses and suggested instead a new method of payment based on guesswork. Wouldn't it be simpler just to increase his fees by a small percentage?\*

Put bluntly, Shankland was asking to be paid for expenses which he might or might not have incurred.

The City Treasurer refused, commenting wryly: "No other firms have objected to reimbursement on the basis of actual expenditure."

## REBUILDING PARADISE

ON THE Strand/Paradise development the main architects were the local firm Kingham Knight and Associates. Their fee was to be 4½ per cent of the total cost of the scheme.

Shankland, who first thought of the scheme, was appointed consultant architect for a fee of ½ per cent of the total cost.

Kingham's fees worked out at about £126,000. And since Shankland's percentage was one ninth of Kingham's, he might be expected to have received about £14,000. Actually he got £29,000.

This is how it happened: Shankland's original plan for the Strand/Paradise Street area was massive. He envisaged 800 flats in five tower blocks, a shopping centre

\* This curious method of calculating expenses is allowed by RIBA rules, providing the client agrees beforehand.

## HIGH RISK SCHOOLS COUNCIL PLAYING WITH FIRE

LET'S HOPE schoolkids in the Knowsley area aren't playing with matches.

Not in school, anyway. Some of those schools are none too safe.

Knowsley Council plan to spend £35,000 by April on fire precautions. That's just £50,000 less than the Chief Fire Officer recommended in a critical report to the education committee last year.

The eventual total cost of carrying out his recommendations is estimated at £300,000.

The first £35,000 is being spent on the thirteen worst schools mentioned in the Fire Officer's report. Schools like:

- Knowsley Longview Modern: "All extinguishers missing."
- Kirkby Park Brow Junior and Infants: "Means of escape unsatisfactory."
- Halewood Grange Comprehensive: "Equipment required (lots). Bad report."
- Kirkby Westvale Infants: "Urgent repairs required."
- Halewood St Andrews R.C.: "A great deal of work to be done."
- St Dominic's R.C. Secondary: "Bad report. System requires overhaul."

Dozens of other schools in Kirkby, Prescot and Halewood need attention. Most have "inadequate" fire alarms.

Sometimes, the council plan to install electric alarms to replace the old mechanical ones, "which in some cases," said an official, "can't be heard in parts of the school."

FOOTNOTE: The child-care conscious Knowsley Council have also been having difficulty insuring their play areas. The insurance company consider some of the equipment too dangerous.

## POLICE HARASS CRITIC

LIVERPOOL POLICE have given their reaction to an independent inquiry into police violence — by hounding the man who started it.

Tony Turner, a Chester businessman, got together a committee to examine the large number of allegations against the Merseyside Police.

The formation of the committee attracted wide publicity at the end of last year. Tony Turner was interviewed in the press and on television.

It did not go unnoticed by the guardians of the law.

● DECEMBER 30. 12.25am. Tony's car was stopped, searched, and his brief case examined. He was given five days to produce his driving documents at a police station.

12.40am. Stopped again. Car searched.

1.35 a.m. Tailed by police mini.

1.50am. Stopped and searched again.

This time the police tried to read the papers in his brief case.

● JANUARY 2. 10.40pm. Stopped and car checked. Given five days to produce driving documents a second time.

11.30pm. Stopped again, then tailed to the Mersey tunnel.

● JANUARY 14. Followed to a committee meeting by a police Land Rover.

After the meeting, followed to the tunnel.

Tony Turner had had enough. He wrote to the Chief Constable threatening legal action if the harassment continued.

Since then, police interest in this dangerous and desperate individual has subsided.

## Everyman Theatre

Hope St., Liverpool

Tel: 051-709 4776

Commencing February 26 for 9 performances only

### WIDOWERS' HOUSES

by George Bernard Shaw

*Incisive and witty critique of slum housing and the people behind it.*

Commencing February 27 Matinees at 2.00, Sat. 2.30

### The Pig and the Junkle

*Magical children's play by Brian Patten*

Commencing March 19

### Sherlock's Last Case

by Matthew Lang

*An Everyman look at a legend...*

## ARMY OUT-MANOEUVRES ITSELF

# TATTOOS ALL OVER

THE ARMY may well be regretting they ever held a tattoo in Bootle.

The tattoo, thinly disguised as a 'free entertainment' was quickly followed by large recruiting adverts in local papers — and a bill for £600 which the council had to pay.

It is this bill which may now stop

the army getting their hands on some new recruits in the much larger Liverpool and Knowsley areas.

Bootle's costly mistake was at the back of Knowsley councillors' minds when they threw out a plan for a similar tattoo.

After some dithering, Liverpool council have gone off the idea too.